"The Aspects of Linguistic Hegemony and the Styles of its Avoidance in English Language Learners: A Study of Students from Department of English, Hodiedah University"

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Introduction

Linguistic imperialism refers to "the transfer of a dominant language to other people". The transfer is essentially a demonstration of power—traditionally, military power but also, in the modern world, economic power—and aspects of the dominant culture are usually transferred along with the language. It is a form of power that empowers some while disempowering others. The Ghanaian sociolinguist, Gilbert Ansre, who describes it as any situation in which the speakers of a language are dominated by another language _to the point where they believe they can and should use only that foreign language when it comes to transactions dealing with the more advanced aspects of life such as education, philosophy, literature, government, the administration of justice etc. Ansre further adds that, Linguistic imperialism has a subtle way of warping the way of even the most noble in a society and of preventing him from appreciating and realizing the full potentialities of the indigenous languages. English Linguistic Imperialism is a term that derived from the discussion of why English has gained the status of a ―global language‖ and whose interests it serves. At the same time we have to question whose right or duty it is to use such a term. Robert Phillipson adopts the term *Linguistic imperialism* that was first mentioned by Gilbert Ansre. Phillipson believes that English keeps on being deliberately spread to serve British and North-American interests. His theory of linguistic imperialism draws heavily on Galtung (1980) who describes imperialism under six broad, interrelated headings: economic, political, military, communicational, cultural and social. The world, in Galtung‘s theory, is divided into the Centre (powerful Western countries) and the Periphery (countries dominated by the Centre). Within both the Centre and the Periphery there are other Centres and Peripheries. Imperialism has characteristically three stages. In the first stage, the elites in the Periphery countries are the colonisers themselves. In the second stage, in neo-colonialist societies, the colonisers are replaced by local elites, speaking the language of the colonisers and often educated in the colonial country. In such neo-colonial societies, transnational organisations are usually present, playing a key role in keeping the country effectively subjugated. In the next stage of imperialism, the neo-neo-colonialist, the physical presence of the dominating Centre‘s personnel becomes unnecessary, since international control can be affected through technology, especially computer technology

There is an increased concern these days, in the field of multilingual and multicultural development, about the invasive and sometimes destructive spread of the English language into other languages and cultures. This global spread of English has been described as linguistic imperialism. Some scholars believe that English has become an effective weapon for cultural and economic domination. Others see the spread of English more positively, maintaining that the English language has become globalised for historical and practical reasons, and that it can help the development of poor countries without necessarily endangering their cultures. Many thinkers believe that the position of English language in the world is not accidental. The factors behind the spread of English are differently understood by many. The most important factors have been the role of the British Empire in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and of the US after the First and Second World Wars. On the one hand, authors like Crystal (1997) believe that English was just "at the right place at the right time"

The world‘s languages are indeed dying off at an alarming rate. Many languages are not used anymore for communication and some others are used by a small number of people, with the death of these people these languages may become mere history. Of the estimated six thousand languages in the world, more than half are expected to become extinct by the end of the century, with only 10 percent considered to have a secure future. In today‘s ―global village,‖ only one hundred languages are spoken by 90 percent of the world‘s population (Nettle and Romaine 2000). Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (2000), a leading international biodiversity and linguistic-rights advocate, argues that the majority of language communities over the last hundred years have become victims of linguistic genocide. She associates this form of genocide with a desire to destroy potential competition for political and economic power, in order to eliminate claims to nation-state rights among indigenous and minority populations.

Research Questions

- What are the aspects of linguistics hegemony in the students of Department of English, Faculty of Education, Hodiedah University.
- What are the styles that can be used to avoid the linguistics hegemony in the students of Department of English, Faculty of Education, Hodiedah University.?

The Aim of the Study

The study aims to identify: (1) the aspects of English language hegemony in the students of Department of English, Faculty of Education, Hodiedah University. And (2) the styles that can be used to avoid English language hegemony in the students of Department of English ,Faculty of Education, Hodiedah University. Viz how linguistic hegemony can be turned from an instrument of imperialism and hegemony into an instrument of intellectual liberation and socio-political emancipation.

Literature Review

English is being perceived increasingly across the world as a language of opportunity and professional advancement. English is also being promoted universally as a language that confers unique advantages to professionals in any field. Modern English, sometimes described as the first global lingua franca, is also regarded as the first world language. It is the world's most widely used language in newspaper publishing, book publishing, international telecommunications, scientific publishing, international trade, mass entertainment, and diplomacy. English has ceased to be an "English language" in the sense of belonging only to people who are ethnically English. Use of English is growing country-by-country internally and for international communication. Most people learn English for practical rather than ideological reasons. For example, the view of the English language among many Indians has gone from associating it with colonialism to associating it with economic progress, and English continues to be an official language of India.

Many regional international organisations such as the European Free Trade Association, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) set English as their organisation's sole working language even though most members are not countries with a majority of native English speakers. While the European Union (EU) allows member states to designate

any of the national languages as an official language of the Union, in practice English is the main working language of EU organisations. Although in most countries English is not an official language, it is currently the language most often taught as a foreign language. The demand for English from nonnative speakers has created a huge international English-language-teaching industry. Although American English has been the dominant partner, the British Council was set up after 1945 to promote the English language and British culture. By the 1990s the council had some 120,000 students learning English through its offices abroad and some 400,000 candidates for its English exams. A working knowledge of English has become a requirement in a number of occupations and professions such as medicine and computing. English has become so important in scientific publishing that more than 80 percent of all scientific journal articles indexed by Chemical Abstracts in 1998 were written in English, as were 90 percent of all articles in natural science publications by 1996 and 82 percent of articles in humanities publications by 1995.

English between Hegemony and Necessity

Everything has got advantages and disadvantages, even medicine has side effects. However we cannot stop taking medicine only for its minor side effects. We should try to minimize and avoid these disadvantages as much as possible. It contends that the spread of English as the language of globalization cannot be fully understood without realization of the hegemonic and imperialistic nature of English. The increased use of the English language globally has had an effect on other languages, leading to some English words being assimilated into the vocabularies of other languages. This influence of English has led to concerns about language death, and to claims of linguistic imperialism, and has provoked resistance to the spread of English; however the number of speakers continues to increase because many people around the world believe that English provides them with opportunities for better employment and improved lives. English represents a world full of promises of better opportunities, higher standards of living. Despite the hegemonic and imperialistic nature of English, it is still badly needed for the purpose of communicating with the world, education, technology, economy and development. Standing against English and depicting it as an instrument of imperialism is not a proper reaction. We should look for solutions that can decrease the hegemonic effects on indigenous language and community. For instance through an increase in the creation of materials

contextualized for the local culture, greater adaptation to the local culture, respect of non-native speakers of English. Learners should be encouraged to respect not to look down on their native languages. They must consider English as a need for development and communication not as a prestige. Learners should not be forced or encouraged to imitate American or British accent. They should consider English as a need for development, opportunities and communication not as prestigious privilege.

Recently there have been calls in Asia for the teaching of English as an International Language. International English is often defined as English that is spoken both by native and non-native speakers, and a language which is the property of the world instead of the property of the United States or the UK. The redefinition of English as an International Language (EIL) is a serious political undertaking, as is all language education at its core. Redefining English as an International Language is an attempt to denationalize English and divest the American hegemony from its claim on the English language. The EIL movement, led by fluent non-native speakers of English in various countries who have been unable to access the higher levels of power in the American hegemony, attempts to create a linguistic powerbase that is free from American influence.

There is no replacement for English as a global lingua franca now. If the continued spread of English is to be construed as an unwelcome development, what can be done to replace it without major pitfalls on other culture and languages? If America or UK are deemed to be an unjust, unwelcome cultural and linguistic influence in the world, could the United Nations replace them? If not, then what other alternatives are available? Even if there is another language that can replace English like French, Russian or any other language, then certainly there will be hegemony and imperialism from these countries. On the other hand, the use of several official languages in communication, education, economy..etc. means that there has to be translation from the original language into other official languages, but this is often viewed as a waste of time and money. There is thus a tension between the demands of equity, leading to the recognition of the importance of several languages, and the convenience of using only one.

Chapter Scheme

Chapter one

Chapter one is an introduction that is designed to present a brief background of the study. It consists of the statement of research problem, theoretical background, scope of limitation, the aim and the significance of the study.

Chapter Two

This chapter presents literature review relating to the study. It reviews the previous studies and previous theories.

Chapter Three

This chapter will discuss the methodology and the instrument used in data collection. It will discuss the research sample as well as the research procedure.

Chapter Four

This chapter is devoted for the analysis of data and the result from the different instrument**.** It will reveal the aspects of linguistics that are discovered from the data collected and it will present the styles of their avoidance.

Chapter Five

This is the concluding chapter which contains the summery and the major finding of the analysis done in the previous chapter. It will present a conclusion of the whole study and finally will come up with the suggestions and recommendations to avoid linguistic hegemony.

Methodology

The research approach of collecting the data is quantitative. The quantitative method will be used to conduct the research.

Instrument

The source of data is a questionnaire that can be distributed to students in Department of English, Faculty of Education, Hodiedah University. And also interviews are used to elicit deeper and wider explanations and data.

The sample

The research community is the students of Department of English, Faculty of Education, Hodiedah University. The samples are random representatives of students of level 1, 2, 3 and 4 in Department of English, Faculty of Education, Hodiedah University. A simple random will be used to select the participants in the questionnaire and interview

Analysis

The SPSS will be used to analyze the data collected through questionnaires and interviews

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